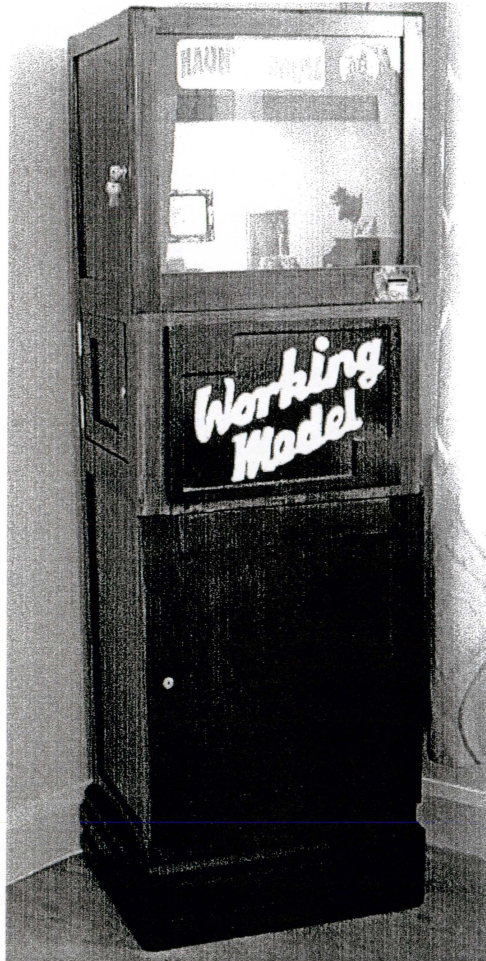


Mechanical Memories Magazine

ISSUE 56

MAY 2011



The only UK magazine dedicated to Vintage Coin-Operated Amusement Machines

Mechanical Memories Magazine

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Editorial

Hello, and here we are at last with Issue 55 of Mechanical Memories Magazine. It seems ages since the last mag., but then I did get that out early (by my standards, at least). I just about managed to get it back from the printers literally the day before the school holidays, but then as I was in Brighton every day, it took the best part of a week to get (most of) the mags in the post. Unfortunately, there were a few that slipped the net, particularly the internationals, so apologies to those of you who received yours really late. I did the best I could, but not getting home from Brighton until after 9.00 most evenings hardly set the mood for stuffing envelopes and sticking stamps and address labels.

And on the subject of Brighton, you may not see another magazine for a few years as it is more than likely I shall be serving a considerable amount of time at Her Majesty's pleasure! Because if just one more person says "Bet you had a great Easter with all that hot weather" I'm almost certain to commit a violent act of murder. No, I didn't have a great Easter, in fact it's the worst I've ever had. Sure, there were plenty of punters, but they were the wrong punters. They were the time wasters we normally expect in June and July – just down to the seaside to lounge about and make the beach look untidy! Things haven't improved either. People, particularly families, are not coming out, and those that do are not spending any money. This year looks set to be crap, and frankly, I think it is unlikely the situation will improve in the foreseeable future. It would be interesting to know how other vintage operators are getting on (or anyone in the leisure industry in general). I know Clive had a good Easter up in Southport, but then he does have a captive audience, his arcade being the only attraction on the pier. Anyway, drop me a line and let me know how things are (and if at all possible, enclose a couple of fifty pound notes)!

Well, that's about it for now – rant over. Another couple of weeks, and school half term will be with us, so as usual I shall be open at Brighton for the week. If you're in the area, do pop down to see me.....and bring a bus load of kids with loads of money to spend on the machines!

Till next time, all the best

Jerry

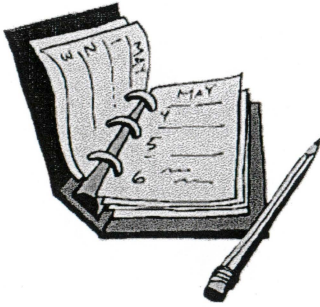
News and Coming Events

Classic Machines in Somerset

I learnt recently of a fun attraction that is sure to be of interest to readers visiting the north Somerset area, especially if you're with the family. Tony Evans emailed me details of classic electro-mechanical pinball machines that can be found within the Fun City theme park, part of the Brean Leisure Park complex on the Somerset coast. The machines are housed in two retro arcades: Pinball Wizardz and the Coney Island Arcade. Also included is a good selection of electro-mechanical shooting games, dating from the 1960s and 70s, and even a few allwins. The park is not open daily outside of school holidays, so check opening times on the park's website: www.brean.com. I also found some nice pictures and further information at www.pinballnews.com – well worth a look.



Some of the EM shooters and a driving game in the Pinball Wizardz arcade.



Dates for your diary

Bonhams Mechanical Music & Scientific Instruments Sale 17th May
Knowle

Carters at Dreamland 28th May – 5th June
Dreamland, Margate

Great Dorset Steam Fair 31st Aug. – 4th September
Tarrant Hinton, Dorset

MMM Vintage Slot Collectors' Show & Auction 27th November
Provisional – date and venue to be confirmed

Bonhams Mechanical Music & Scientific Instruments Sale 29th November
Knowle

Don't forget – if you know of any event which would be of interest to readers of the magazine, please let me know so that I can include details on this page.

Dreamland

MARGATE

Save Dreamland Update May 2011

Thanet District Council and the Dreamland Trust are working in partnership to create a unique visitor attraction for Margate, which will secure the town's regeneration and boost the local economy. The new Dreamland will be the world's first amusement park of thrilling historic rides with classic sideshows, vintage cafes, restaurants, special events and gardens. Millions of pounds have already been invested by the council, Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the Heritage Lottery Fund to bring this project to fruition.

After several years of negotiation with the owners of Dreamland proving unfruitful, a Compulsory Purchase Order is due to be served by Thanet District Council on the Dreamland site. The council agreed in May 2010 that it would start compulsory purchase proceedings on the site, if terms were not agreed for the transfer of the freehold of the cinema building and land. At the time, this had been agreed in principle by the landowners, the Margate Town Centre Regeneration Company. The land would then be given by the council to the Dreamland Trust on a long lease for a peppercorn rent. Since then, the council had held detailed negotiations with the landowners, but it had not been possible to agree an acceptable position to the council. As a result, the council's Cabinet agreed on Thursday 28 April to launch compulsory purchase proceedings.

This is a turn of events that the Dreamland Trust would have preferred not to see. Our preference has always been to implement this project in partnership with the landowners, but for a number of reasons this was not possible. With all the technical work now complete and a substantial part of the funding in place, the acquisition of the site by the Council will allow the Trust to commence work on the implementation of what is a key project for the regeneration of Margate.

Dreamland will be the place to visit over the May Bank Holiday period with the welcome return of Carter's Steam Fair from Saturday 28th May to Sunday 5th June 2011. Back by popular demand, Carter's Steam Fair has extended their Margate appearance to nine thrilling days to coincide with the Ace Café Margate Meltdown on Bank Holiday Monday 30th May, 2011. Last year the family-run vintage funfair attracted thousands of very happy visitors to the Dreamland site who delighted in the traditional thrilling rides and the guest appearance of the all-time daredevil classic Wall of Death.

This year we can look forward to Carter's Paramount Chair-O-Planes having received a complete restoration in recent months. These are the second large ride the Carter family took on the road back in the early days of being showmen and believed to originate from Europe during the early 1920s.

Nick Laister

Chairman, The Dreamland Trust

www.dreamlandmargate.com

www.savedreamland.co.uk



Carters gallopers at Dreamland last year, with the Scenic Railway in the background.

NEW BOOK RELEASE

Blackpool Pleasure Beach: More Than Just an Amusement Park by Professor Vanessa Toulmin

Professor Vanessa Toulmin of the National Fairground Archive presents the story of Blackpool Pleasure Beach. The memorabilia book has been carefully produced in close collaboration with Pleasure Beach and offers a unique insight into the history of the park.

The 144 page book showcases many images from the park's never before seen archives, plus a whole host of recent pictures detailing the various changes at Pleasure Beach. Chapters include the numerous world renowned designers that have worked with Pleasure Beach creating stunning art deco architecture throughout the park, the many award winning shows and the development of roller coasters from the early wooden designs right up to the modern steel looping counterparts.

Amanda Thompson, Pleasure Beach Managing Director says: "Pleasure Beach is such a special place which has provided amazing entertainment for the whole family for over 100 years. The book captures the magic of the park – detailing our incredible history from the very first ride in 1896 right up to the latest exciting development of Nickelodeon Land due to open in April 2011. Pleasure Beach is built on a 42 acre site and considered the most ride intensive park in the world. It is designed by some of the leaders of the amusement park industry, and has a huge influence on the worldwide leisure industry. Since its creation it's been a real family affair and remains so to this day. Pleasure Beach and its incredible shows have been enjoyed by millions of people."

Professor Vanessa Toulmin, Chair in Early Film and Popular Entertainment, University of Sheffield says, "The Pleasure Beach is the greatest amusement park in the World. It's a credit to both the Thompson family and the people of Blackpool - that this magnificent resort has been here for four generations and will be here for the next."

ISBN Number: 9780956445216

Format: Paperback

Number of Pages: 144

Publication Date: 2011

Publisher: Blackpool Council



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CATALOGUE AND DESK DIARY

Amusement Trades Exhibition 1960

By Robert Rowland

Some months ago, I was fortunate to come across an official catalogue for the sixteenth annual Amusement Trades Exhibition, held at the New Royal Horticultural Hall, Westminster, London SW1 from the 2nd to 4th February 1960. Looking through this catalogue gave me a rare insight about this event, and hopefully I can also relay a similar feeling to you readers.

Firstly, I notice a couple of trade papers are mentioned: *Worlds Fair*, priced at 6d weekly, and *Automatic World*, priced at 2/- monthly. The advertisement states: 'Both will give you all the up to the minute news and views on everything covered by the ATE. No other publications cover the entire field'. Next is a two-page spread from *Crompton and Bates Ltd*, 166 – 172 High Street, Ramsgate, Kent. The left-hand page shows their latest novelty – **Bear Shooting Machine**, with 'four-way animation', whilst

Amusement Trades Exhibition 1960

BEAR SHOOTING MACHINE
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Amusement Trades Exhibition 1960

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the opposite page shows the eight-way **Filmstars**, which I have mentioned in a previous article. The stars chosen were Ava Gardner, Jane Russell, Gregory Peck and Marilyn Monroe. Marilyn was the highest win, paying 6d.

A few pages ahead and I notice a single page for *Parkers Automatic Supplies Ltd*, based in Rhyl, North Wales. They mention **Carousel, Big Top, Photo Finish, Skilful 12, Sputnik, Journey into Space, Over the Sticks, Lucky 18, Jungle Skill, Super 24 Cup** and they go on to say 'specialists in part-exchange and direct importers of all types of automatic machines from USA and the continent.

Fancy a jukebox in your arcade? Well how about one which is 100% British built? It's called **Meteor 200**, the most advanced instrument in the world and unbeatable value for 200 selections at £595, and available on lowest terms. Made by *Chantal*, Station Road, Kingswood, Bristol.

Moving on, we have a full page introducing us to the Mills Super 3 - Dimension **Sky Gunner**, a sleek new attractive gun game with precise true moving targets, supplied by *Mills Novelty Co. Ltd*, Weir Road, Mossley, Lancashire. 'Here for the first time in Britain, not a rifle game, but a machine gun. A proven money-taker in the USA earning 30/- an hour. 200 shots a game, number showing shots used and hits scored. What boy or man does want to handle a machine gun'?

Amusement Trades Exhibition, 1966

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Amusement Trades Exhibition, 1966

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One of the strangest ads for me was *Kraft's Automatics* of London N16. One of their good sellers, the wall machine **Rotolite**, was advertised on the 2d, 4d, 6d payout. On insertion of a penny, you would press the button on the front to set sixteen lights flashing (8 each side), then you would release the button to stop the lights. Any two the same colour was a winner, the top prize was two white paying 6d. But guess what? It states underneath 'also sweet payout version'. What? I just can't imagine a Rotolite that paid out sweets. I saw most machines here in Mablethorpe in the 1960s, but never one of these. If any readers have ever seen a Rotolite that paid out sweets, please let me or Jerry know.

And finally, remember back in the 1960s when you fancied your photo' taken? Well, the **Automatic Photo Studio** was the one. Four different poses for 2/-, which would be completed in three minutes, described as a must for your arcade. Advertised by *Photome Studios Ltd*, Hersham, Surrey in conjunction with *M.B. Automatics*, Blackpool (probably distributors).

Robert Rowland

Amusement Trades Exhibition, 1960

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Amusement Trades Exhibition, 1960

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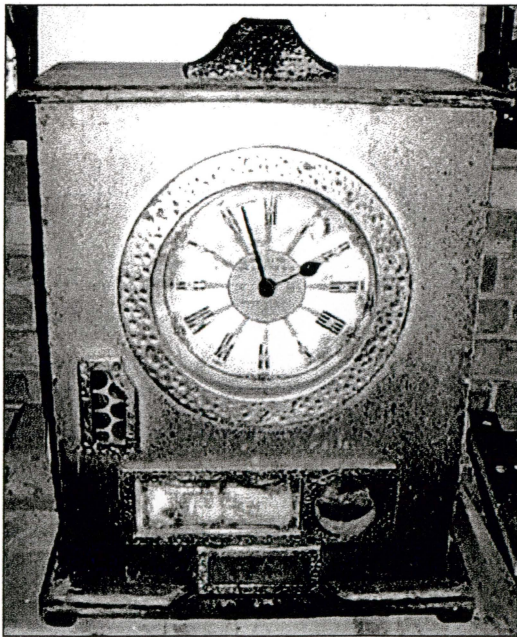
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My Bargain Find

By Graham Millard

Some weeks ago on a Tuesday night, I received a phone call from an old mate who collects Beleek china. He said that whilst visiting an auction house he had seen, what he went on to describe as 'a Drop Penny Game' that I might be interested in. He said, "I doubt whether you would want it because it is in a bit of a state. The mechanism being all rusty and it looks as though it has been in a barn for years."

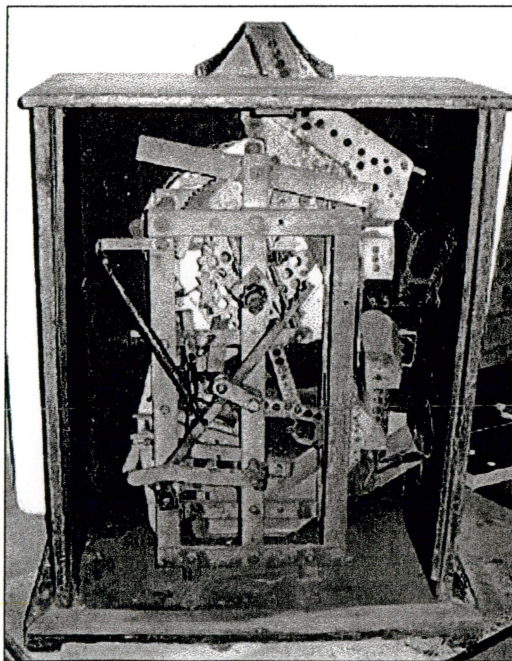
"Did it have a clock face on it?" I said, praying the answer would be "Yes" and it was! The next day I drove out to see this machine hoping that it would be hidden under a table, but no such luck. There it was shining like a beacon standing out from all of the other lots, just what I didn't want! Sure it was a Bryans Clock and like he said, it certainly was in a state. I tried to flick down the pin to see if it had any life in it but it was virtually dead. The hands limped round about twice and the 'Tick Tock' sound never happened. The face had the usual rust marks showing through, as did the instruction card. It had been home to some vermin for a long time judging by the amount of corn that was in the bottom but no matter what, it was a Bryans Clock after all!



What price would it fetch? I had in my mind a figure between £180 to £250 as it was in an auction where I was hoping nobody would know what it really was and what it might be worth. After registering on auction day, I said to a mate who was with me "If he says I can start the bidding at £300, we're off." The lot came up and the auctioneer said, "Shall we start the bidding at £30?" (Obviously no bids on the books)! I thought long and hard with an expressionless face for at least 3 seconds before casually raising my card. Now try as he could, nobody would bid £35 so he knocked it down to me. It amazes me, with a room full of people, nobody had the slightest interest in it other than me. How lucky was that? Mind you I had to pay commission and VAT to a grand total of £35.40.....but I thought, "To hell with the expense."

The clock has had gallons of oil and been cleaned up, and I was surprised that it works perfectly. I have spent quite a few very enjoyable hours on it. I have got to add a new face, sort the cabinet out, repaint the tin bits inside, re assemble and hope that Bobs yer uncle and another addition to the family is installed. This clock has a different mech. from the one I have had for years and initially I thought that there was something missing but all appears to be well. Definitely a bargain find!

Graham Millard



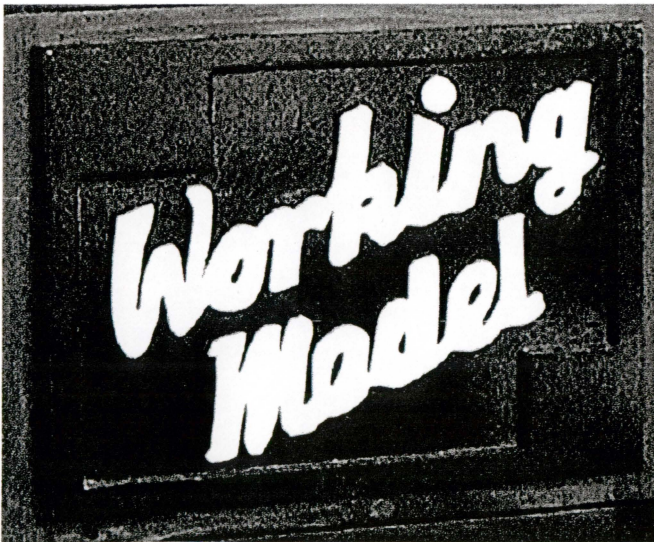


The Haunted House Model

By Stuart Dale

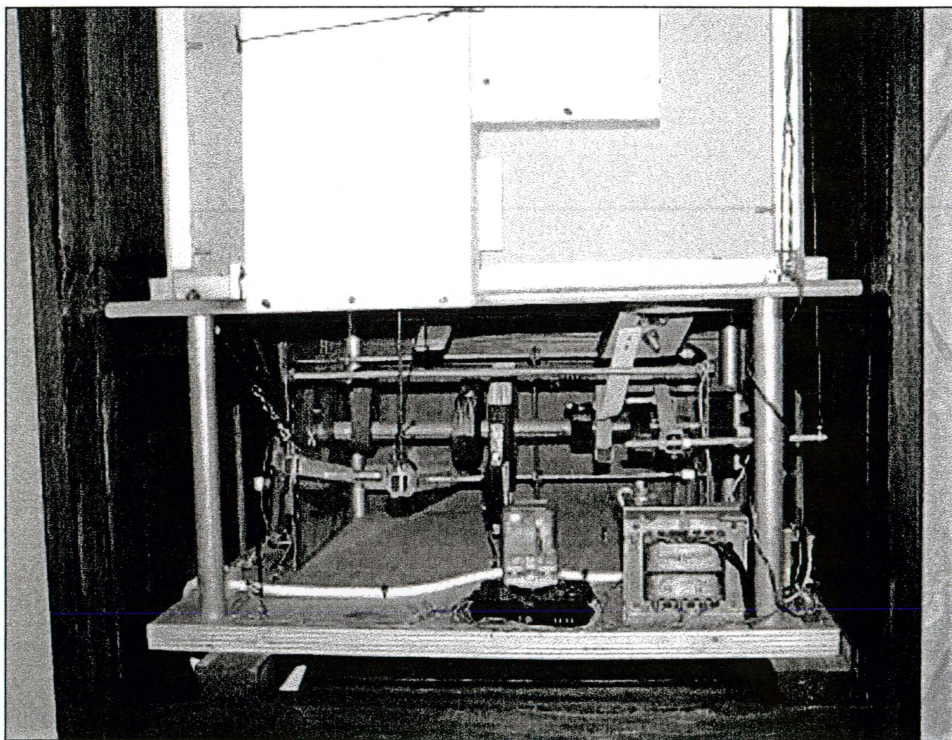
So here we are once again, and this month I thought I would introduce you to my full sized working model. I say 'my' working model, because this is one that I built from scratch in my own workshop. I know it won't be to everyone's taste as it isn't a genuine vintage machine, but then I never intended it to be passed off as such. For me, creating a machine from scratch is all part of the love I have for vintage slot machines, and it gives me the chance to step back in time and experience what it must have been like to work hands on in the slot machine trade in the 'good old days'. The theme for this model is the Haunted House. It is not based on any particular vintage machine; it is my own interpretation of what the Haunted House should be like.

The main cabinet is about 6 feet tall and is about 25 inches square. It is constructed from good quality pine, and all the joints are correctly fitted with mortise and tenons. The infill panels are made from faced plywood, and each panel has been rebated into its own framework. The cabinet has five hinged and lockable doors with which you can access the mechanism and cash box. The 'Working Model' sign on the front of the machine was made in two parts, with the white lettering being cut with a fretsaw, and then overlaid onto a solid black background. The effect is quite realistic.



The mechanism/model when required can be removed from the cabinet via the rear door, and was designed as a standalone unit. This is ideal for when you have to work on the model, as it will run quite happily on the work bench in just the same way as it runs when fitted in the cabinet. It is powered by a 24 volt ac motor, via a mains transformer that is built into the mechanism. This transformer also powers several 12 volt lamps that help to provide the special effects for the model. The only concession I have made to 'modern' technology is a small microchip wired to a pair of computer speakers that are located in the lower half of the cabinet, this provides a loud sinister rumble of thunder as the model runs through its sequence. This effect was more of an afterthought, but it does add to the feel of the machine. The model is made to accept the old British penny, if you try to use other smaller coins they will be rejected but not returned and the machine will not start.

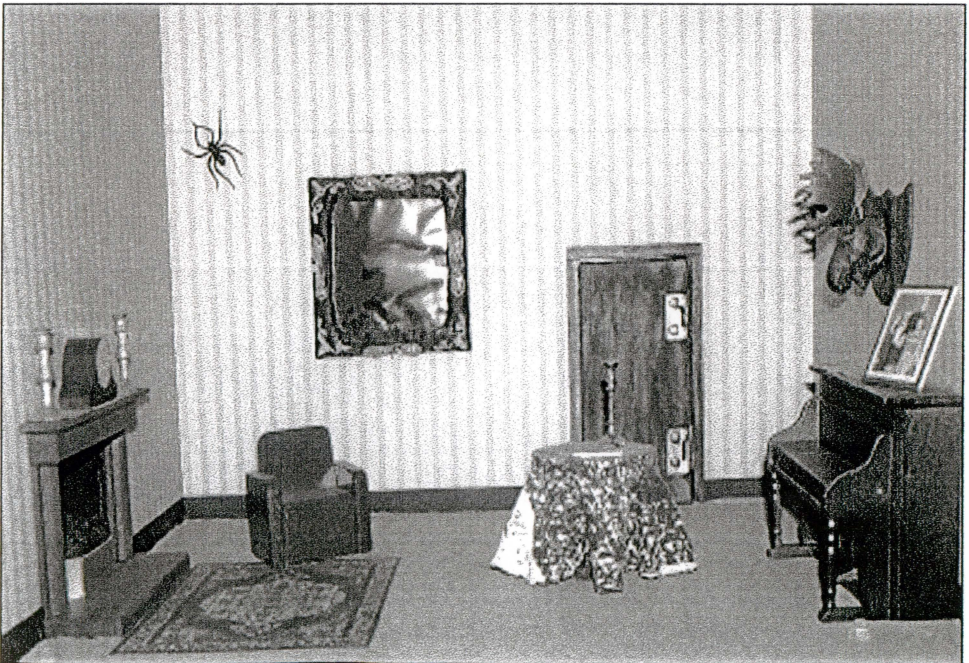
Once an old 1D coin is inserted in the slot the machine starts its 20 second cycle. The main lights come on, the main lights change in intensity and colour, becoming lighter and then darker over the 20 second cycle. First your eye will be drawn to the red armchair, as it rises up revealing a grotesque figure reaching out to you through a hole in the floor, and as the chair suddenly drops back to the floor a skeleton can be seen



hanging upside down in the fireplace. Next the stuffed moose's head on the opposite wall slowly turns to look at you, at the same time you will hear a loud roll of thunder as the lid of the piano mysteriously opens and closes. Your eye is then caught by the mirror on the rear wall, as the mirror changes to reveal mad uncle Henry who was walled up alive some years ago. Next the door at the side of the mirror opens and a mummy covered in bandages can be seen looking out. At the same time, the table in the centre of the room rises up and then suddenly drops back to the floor, the lights then go out and it's time to insert another penny.

It was great fun designing and building this machine, and for me, the fun is what it's all about, so who knows what I might build next????

Stuart Dale



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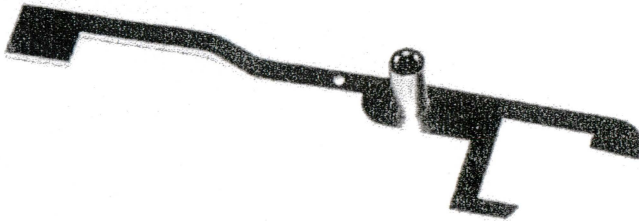
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Jerry Chattenton

10 Bedford Road, Dartford DA1 1SR

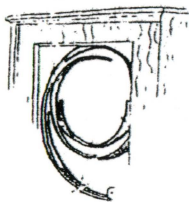
For Sale

1930s Saxony type (but probably British) allwin

Good working order, on old penny play

£450

Jerry 07710 285360



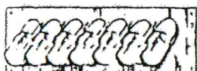
ALLWIN TRACK

Grooved & chromed just like the original.

Inner with flat & nipple
17½" inside length
Middle 18" inside length
Outer 40" inside length

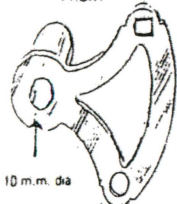


Win Tabs Red printer
on Silver lot sticky
backed 12 on a sheet

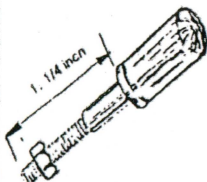


CHROMED 7 ball win
gallery. 6 x 1. 9/16

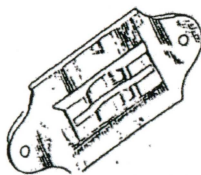
CHROMED TRIGGER
FRONT



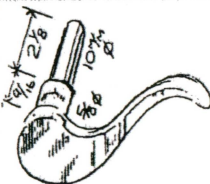
10 m.m. dia



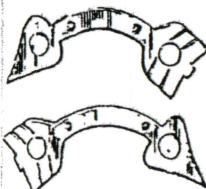
CHROMED THUMB
STOP



COIN SLOT
to suit 2p but can
be filed bigger

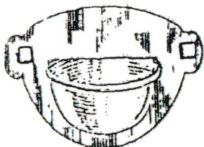


TRIGGER



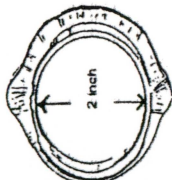
CHROMED ARROWS
Reversible.

CHROMED PAYOUT BOWL

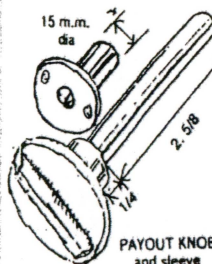


2.5 inch dia cup 2 x 0.25 inch fixing
squares at 3.75 inch centres.

CHROMED KNOB SHIELD



2 x tapped M5 fixing holes on
extended nipples 2. 1/2 centres.



PAYOUT KNOB
and sleeve

PRICE LIST

N01 Win Tabs (12 per
sheet) £15.25

N02 Ball Gallery £12.55

N03 Thumb Stop £6.25

N04 Coin Slot (2p)
£9.25

N05 Trigger Front £9.25

N06 Trigger £12.25

N07 Payout Arrow
£2.55

N08 Payout Bowl &
Surround £15.55

N09 Payout Knob
Shield £9.95

N10 Payout Knob &
Sleeve £11.95

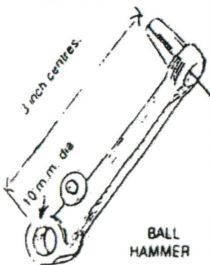
N11 Ball Hammer £4.95

N12 Ball Cups
1-5 £9.99each
6-10 £7.99each
11+ £5.99each

N13 Spandrells £14.99

N14 Allwin Track
inner £19.00
middle £19.00
outer £23.50
set of 3 £47.00

All prices include
VAT @ 17.5% and P&P.
Discount for quantity
orders - please ring.

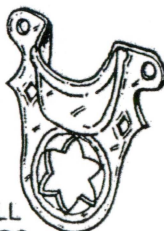


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SPANDRELLS



BALL
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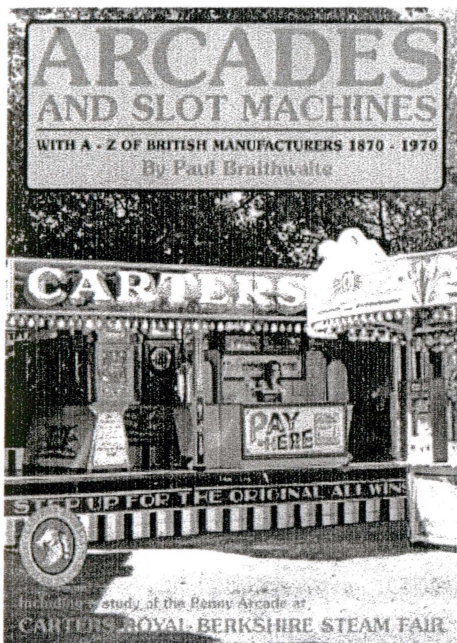
This volume captures Watling Manufacturing Company's full range from scales to bandits in catalogues, brochures, line folders, broadsides and service data, original patent and mock-up photos of the ROL-A-TOR line, artists' preparatory airbrush renderings for advertising and promotional material and Watling family photos and correspondence. Plenty of legendary anecdotes and well-informed context in the accompanying commentary. Hardback, 192 pages, b/w. **Price: £15**

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